

INFORMATIVE REPORT

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DATE DISTR. 23 September 1948

COUNTRY Germany (Russian Zone)

SUBJECT Police Developments in the Russian Zone

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SUPPLEMENT TO
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1. The radical trend in the police apparatus of the Soviet Zone, which has become especially noticeable since the appointment of Dr. Kurt Fischer as President of the German Administration of the Interior, is continuing unchecked. The past several weeks have witnessed a thorough purge of the police in all five states of the Soviet Zone, in the Soviet sector of Berlin, and in the German Administration of the Interior. It is estimated that approximately 20% of the police force in the Lander, approximately 10% in the Soviet sector of Berlin, and about 5% in the German Administration of the Interior were dismissed within the past sixty days. Simultaneously a large-scale recruitment for the police is under way in the Soviet Zone. Recruits are needed not only to replace those dismissed recently, but also to bring the police force up to the new strength authorized by the SMA. Complete new strength figures are not yet available for all the states; in Saxony-Anhalt the total number of police for the fiscal year 1948 - 1949 has been increased from approximately 17,000 to nearly 25,000. Similar increase of police strength was reported from Saxony. Additional personnel are also needed to fill up the ranks of the Border Police and the newly authorized paramilitary police. Estimates on the strength of the latter are not yet available.
2. The current purge of the police is aimed at former members of the Social Democratic Party, members of the bourgeois parties in the Soviet Zone (CDU and LDP), and professional civil servants in the police, regardless of party affiliations. SED membership is not considered a guarantee of loyalty to Communist ideals. Among leading officials dismissed recently were the chief of the Administrative Police in the German Administration of the Interior, Dr. Erich Karl Zeitz; the chief of the Water and Railway Police in Saxony-Anhalt, Anneberg; the vice-president of the Magdeburg Police, the commander of the Schutzpolizei in Thuringia, W.D. Rausch; and a great many individuals formerly on the staff of the above. The manner in which police personnel of lesser importance were tested on their political reliability can be illustrated by the events which took place in Kreis Oberbarnim (Brandenburg). All members of the police had to report to special examining committees where they were questioned among other things, as to whether or not they considered the LDP (which is licensed by the SMA in the Soviet Zone) a democratic organization. Those answering the question in the affirmative were immediately given notice of dismissal. They were not to report again for duty; their salaries were to be paid until 30 September 1948.

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